

CLAIMS

1. An enhanced video based surveillance system for use in the surveillance of a zone, the system comprising the steps of:
 - generating and storing an initial background image of the zone, such image being composed of constant background features,
 - using the stored background image to partition incoming video images of the zone into segments visually representative of foreground features and background features respectively, and
 - digitally enhancing foreground features relative to the background features in the images, thereby to attract visual attention to such foreground features.
2. An enhanced video based surveillance system according to claim 1 wherein the foreground features include objects and/or persons imposed in the derived images on the constant, stored background image.
3. An enhanced video based surveillance system according to either claim 1 or claim 2 wherein the digital enhancement step include highlighting, colour tinting or colour outlining of foreground features.
4. An enhanced video based surveillance system according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the digital enhancement step include suppression of the background image by colour suppression, colour removal, brightness suppression or relative blurring of the background features.
5. An enhanced video based surveillance system according to any one of the preceding claims wherein digital enhancement is applied to all foreground features.

6. An enhanced video based surveillance system according to any one of claims 1 to 4 wherein digital enhancement is applied to only a single foreground feature.
7. An enhanced video based surveillance system according to any one of claims 1 to 4 wherein digital enhancement is applied only to foreground features in specified sub-zones.
8. An enhanced video based surveillance system according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the enhancement step is implemented in conjunction with a video motion detection system such that motion-related foreground features only are digitally enhanced.
9. An enhanced video based surveillance system according to any one of the preceding claims further comprising a video motion detection system, the video motion detection system comprising the steps of subdividing a three-dimensional zone which is to be monitored into a plurality of three-dimensional sub-zones, and automatically monitoring motion in at least one sub-zone by means of stereo calibrated digital cameras arranged to view the sub-zone(s).
10. A video motion detection system comprising the steps of sub-dividing a three-dimensional zone which is to be monitored into a plurality of three-dimensional sub-zones, and automatically monitoring motion in at least one sub-zone by means of stereo calibrated digital cameras arranged to view the sub-zone(s).